

Safety and Aesthetics in Urban Roadway Design
Interdisciplinary Group Meeting
January 28, 2003, 9:00 to 3:00 p.m.
WSDOT Materials Lab Conference Room

Attendees:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Agency</u>	<u>Phone</u>
Dave Olson	WSDOT – Design Office	360-705-7952
Brian Hasselbach	WSDOT – Design Office	360-705-7255
Mike Johnson	City of Seattle – Rdwy Design	206-684-5187
Jim Morrow	City of Tukwila	306-433-0179
Maiya Andrews	City of Des Moines	206-870-6523
Paul Harker	Federal Highway Administration	360-753-9552
Ted Focke	WSDOT – Design Office	360-705-7270
Larry Hinson	WSDOT – Design Office	360-705-7540
Thera Black	Thurston Regional Planning Council	360-786-5480
Jim Seitz	Association of Washington Cities	360-753-4137
Mark Maurer	WSDOT – Design Office	360-705-7242
King Cushman	Puget Sound Regional Council	206-464-6174
Shari Schaftlein	WSDOT – Environmental Affairs	360-705-7446
Rocky Piro	Puget Sound Regional Council	206-464-6360
Darlene Sharar	WSDOT – Design Office	360-705-7251
Julie Matlick	WSDOT – Highways & Local Programs	360-705-7505
Chris Mudgett	County Road Administration Board	360-753-5989
Ken Miller	City of Federal Way	253-661-4136

Dave Olson welcomed everyone to the meeting and briefly summarized the highlights from the previous meeting. Dave reminded the group that Brian Hasselbach was hired to fill Nancy Boyd's vacancy and turned the meeting over to Brian.

Brian requested any additions to the agenda and asked for updates from each of the sub-committees.

Sub-Committee Reports:

Jurisdiction Roles and Responsibilities: Brian reported that the Instructional Letter developed by the sub-committee was signed off on last week and is now available on the web page. Hard copies of the IL will be distributed to all Design and Local Agency Guidelines Manual holders.

Brian also reported that, as noted in the IL, work is currently underway to develop a process that will allow cities to propose median treatments, within state highways, that will undergo a negotiations process with the Department. Brian noted that the process is patterned off of the In-Service Evaluation process.

The draft process is currently undergoing internal review, but Brian anticipates resolving the comments soon and distributing the draft process to the IDG for review and comment.

Brian will coordinate with Highways & Local Programs and AWC for wider distribution and comment, when appropriate.

Community Partnerships Forum: Julie Matlick reported that the Forum's document, *Building Projects that Build Communities*, went to print on January 27th. Julie explained that the Forum's document focuses on the process of developing partnerships and how to ensure key stakeholders are active participants in the project development process. She noted that the companion document and Forum's document will be complementary works – how do you get folks to the table?, and once they are there, what issues must be discussed?

Paul Harker noted that it is interesting that a number of efforts are underway or on the horizon that may not be labeled as such, but certainly embody the principles of CSD. Paul also noted that given these various efforts, he imagines Washington State must be one of the leaders in integrating CSD into the way we do business.

Urban Funding Issues Group: Mark Maurer reported that this group has been on hiatus, but has recently revived their momentum. Mark noted that he had recently developed a matrix that lists roadside considerations and provides an indication as to whether or not the consideration is eligible for funding, by funding program, and, if eligible, the level of involvement the Department is willing to participate at. The list of considerations attempts to capture most of the elements representative of urban designs.

Mark reported that the group will be meeting on Thursday, January 30th, to work towards completing the matrix and discussions will include notations to be used; and the identification of standards and the need to develop standards (i.e., Department will only pay for the cost to construct the consideration to our standard, anything desired above and beyond will be the financial responsibility of the local agency).

Mark indicated that the draft matrix will be posted on the web, upon completion, and he will be looking to work with Al King to distribute for review and comment to the local agencies.

Jim Seitz encouraged the Urban Funding Issues Group to list not only DOT led projects, but also city-led projects and what elements the Department would pay for – he agreed with the need to identify minimum levels the Department would pay for, based on standards. Jim and Mark noted that this effort is a deviation from the status quo, where eligibility may vary depending on which project office an agency approaches. This effort attempts to quantify and add consistency to the Department's approach with funding participation of these considerations. Mark stressed, however, that this will only be a recommendation to the Department Executives and it will be up to them whether or not the matrix is utilized.

Mark also clarified that this will likely be a multiple phase effort. The first phase is a DOT effort to quantify which roadside considerations are eligible or not eligible for funding, under the current structure of the Department's funding programs. The second

phase will deal with addressing the process that will need to occur to negotiate level of funding involvement in those considerations that are eligible for Department participation or where partnering opportunities are a possibility.

Julie Matlick suggested that it may be helpful to include funding sources and who is responsible for determining which elements are appropriate to fund, into the matrix

Jim noted that this is a very important effort, as the Department may be viewed as a primary funding source, given agencies' limited budgets. Mark noted that the matrix should only be viewed as tool for initiating discussion/negotiation purposes, as its content is similarly based on the availability of funds.

Mike Johnson stressed the need to allow local agencies ample opportunity for review and comment. He also suggested that the matrix may encounter some difficulty in addressing areas where jurisdictions have set local, urban standards that are more stringent than the standards the Department has set and reconciling who will cover the costs.

Training Update: Brian reported that he and Julie have met to discuss CSD/CSS training needs and evaluate options. Brian noted that he and Julie will be meeting with the T2 Center, in the near future, to discuss options for developing the training; cost associated with each option; availability; etc. This information will then be used to create a direction for development of the trainings.

A question was asked about funding of the training – whether T2 Center and/or Staff Development could pay for a portion of the training. Dave noted that everyone's budget is constrained these days, so participation may not be as great as it might have been in the past.

Brian noted that they will be meeting the second week of February to develop the options and felt that they could then use this plan as a means of approaching T2 and possibly FHWA about participating in the cost of the training.

Darlene Sharar discussed an approach she has utilized for Access Management training. She explained to the group that she has developed a half day, canned session that provides a basic introduction to Access and its aspects and can be tailored and offered to audiences at minimal notice. She suggested that this sort of format might be a good intermediate training measure, until a more advanced course could be developed.

King Cushman discussed a new effort the Puget Sound Regional Council is undertaking to develop workshops in small towns to discuss transportation problems; corridor study approach and planning. The effort will involve regional, local agency and WSDOT staff. King welcomed any interested IDG members to the effort's upcoming workshops. King anticipates the first workshop will be held in late April or early May.

Brian also asked the group how they envision the eventual implementation of the companion document will occur. While the companion document will likely be a

component of the proposed CSD/CSS training, Brian expressed concern if there is a delay between the distribution of the document and the proposed training.

The group suggested using Darlene's proposal of a workshop session – emphasizing in the workshop that this is not a new concept or way of doing business, simply a new label to what folks may have been doing all along and a concept that now has greater FHWA support for use.

The group agreed that the workshop sessions should be tailored to the audience and if developed in a 1 or 2 hour format, could easily be incorporated into existing local agency and committee meeting and conference agendas.

Brian also suggested the formation of a Training Sub-Committee that will take a look at the options for developing the two distinct trainings described above and propose recommendations for training to the IDG. Julie Matlick, Thera Black and Dave Olson volunteered to participate on the Training Sub-Committee and Brian requested any other interested participants contact him.

Companion Document: After discussion at the last IDG meeting, a Formatting Sub-Committee was formed to address the appearance of the document and establish guidelines for chapter content, to be distributed to the authors.

The committee established guidelines for consistent development of the chapters – including both the overall look of the document, as well as specific headings and content to be included in the individual chapters.

The following suggestions were made after discussion by the IDG:

- The group generally liked the chapter guidance, however, depending on the nature of the chapter, the chapter's content may not fit nicely into the suggested headings.
- King suggested dropping "Design" from the "Design Purpose and Need" heading and simply allow for discussion of the purpose and need of a consideration.
- Paul suggested caution with the use of "should", "shall", and "may" in the document and the subsequent liability issues that may stem from the use of those terms (Brian clarified that the Design Office has an excellent technical editor who will be participating in the reviews of the chapters and has already prompted Brian to be mindful of the use of those terms and delete them from chapters.).
- Jim and Chris suggested revising the title of the document to "Guidelines for Context Sensitive Solutions".
- The group indicated that a key issue with the chapters is determining how to evaluate trade-offs between modes.
- The group agreed that the intended audience is broad – the document should not be written only to the political side. Rather, it needs to be geared towards consultants, designers, and community officials to prompt the interactive, evaluative design process that CSD/CSS promotes.

- The IDG suggested the importance of a good executive summary for each chapter that explains the chapter's purpose.
- The majority of the group agreed that the document should pertain only to design on state highways.
 - Document should include the definitions of "urban" and "rural", as they are used in the document, and should note that the focus for the companion document began with urban areas, but the application of the document is now more far-reaching.
- The group indicated that the content of the chapters must be non-judgmental – particularly with regards to a chapter's trade-off discussions.

Companion Document Project Schedule: Brian distributed a draft project schedule for the development of the document and discussed a few of the major steps, including the Peer Review, Statewide Review and publications process. Brian indicated that part of the intent of the schedule is to illustrate that a number of additional months will pass between a completed IDG draft and a final publication.

Julie cautioned that the review and publications processes always take longer than expected.

Brian noted that the direction he has received is to attempt to have a useable document in time for the start of this year's design season (September/October). This would require a dramatic streamlining of the proposed schedule, however, and Brian asked for comments from the group as to the importance of having a document of some form available by September/October vs. a completed document that may not be published until the end of the year.

Chris suggested that the intended audience is not just designers and, as such, we should strive for completion of the document as a whole. In fact, given that the most value may be in the project planning and development phase, the September/October deadline should not be the only deadline driver.

It was suggested that an expanded version of the IDG – adding additional representation from Eastern Washington and rural cities and counties – could serve as the Peer Reviewers for the document, thus eliminating that extra layer of review.

The IDG also suggested using the Statewide Review version of the document, as the version for a fall distribution – provided we are confident that comments from the Statewide Review would be minimal. Dave indicated that that is always the Design Office's hope, however, major revisions are sometimes required as a result of the Statewide Review.

The group also discussed the possibility of making a portion of the manual available either via the web page or a CD version, while work continued on the remainder of the document.

Brian also expressed concern with the Statewide Review. This review will presumably include a large cross section of the intended audience – local agencies, Tribes, perhaps consultants, etc. To simply send out the document with little up front discussion, may result in less meaningful comments. Also, simply sending out the entire document to that many folks, presents an interesting logistical issue.

The group agreed that an aggressive schedule is necessary, however, to ensure the document is completed and made available.

Brian expressed some concern with the frequency the IDG meets and how the current schedule may hinder meaningful review and editing of the document. He suggested either meeting more frequently as a group or using the smaller work groups to focus on the development of individual sections.

The IDG expressed concern with being limited to only 1 or 2 sections and the difficulty in ensuring consistency or obtaining a clear picture of the overall document. The group agreed that meeting, as an IDG, on a more frequent basis was preferable. Chris suggested we limit the meetings in between the quarterly meetings to only review and editing sessions on the document and to a couple of hours, instead of an all day meeting.

Brian also asked the group for feedback on how we can begin to market the document. It is important to ensure our intended audience is aware of the effort and its potential. The group suggested taking advantage of the following opportunities:

- upcoming conferences and meetings like APWA and city and county meetings
- FHWA's upcoming conference in April
- AWC and CRAB's calendars
- articles in the T2 newsletter and other publications
- WSDOT/Tribal Transportation conference in the fall

Brian agreed to send out a separate e-mail to the group, requesting dates and locations for upcoming events that would be appropriate for a presentation of the IDG's work and the development of the companion document.

Work Sessions: The group broke up into smaller work sessions to discuss the sections assigned to them and comment on the appropriateness of the current direction.

The following summarizes the comments from each group.

Group 1 (Section III – Dave Olson, Shari Schaftlein, Julie Matlick, Chris Mudgett):

- Duplication of text in the Project Development Approach chapter and the *Building Projects that Build Communities* handbook. Need to set both documents beside each other and look for ways to reduce the redundancy.
- Section generally does an inadequate job of balancing safety and aesthetic needs.
- Recycled Materials chapter may be better suited in the Design Considerations section.

- The section does not address trade-off issues adequately.
- Other planning documents need to be included in the Project Development chapter, including watershed plans, habitat connectivity plans, cultural plans, etc.
- Night Sky Darkness chapter needs additional work. It omitted pedestrian lighting. The city of Bellevue may have additional information that would be useful for this chapter.
- Noise chapter is headed in the right direction but needs to add some consideration to the solutions.
- The table in the Safety Chapter needs to be more neutral.
- 18th Amendment Constraints chapter should not be a stand-alone chapter – it is policy guidance and none of the other policy guidance issues are a stand-alone chapter.

Group 2 (Section V- Darlene Sharar, Mike Johnson, Rocky Piro, Jim Morrow, Ted Focke, Brian Hasselbach):

- Introduction does a good job of laying out the intent of the document, but the chapters don't reflect the direction of the introduction.
- Document should stick to the conflicts; why they are important; and what are the options associated with each?
- Suggest developing issue papers on the conflicts and only discuss what is pertinent to state highway considerations. This would allow the document to be a "living" document – as issues are addressed can be revised or removed; while new issues can be inserted, as they are identified.

Group 3 (Section V – Paul Harker, Mark Maurer, Larry Hinson):

- Introductions should be easy to read – reduce the jargon – anyone should be able to pick it up and understand intent.
- Authors need to be mindful of writing to the intended audience.
- Need to add graphics to the Visual Functions chapter.
- Group will consolidate comments and transmit to Brian.

Group 4 (Sections IV, VI, VIII – Thera Black, King Cushman, Jim Seitz, Maiya Andrews):

In the Roadway Characteristics Section:

- Use the Introduction or Purpose to discuss the multiple functions of state highways.
- Need to either trim the Freight Mobility section or expand the other functions to reflect the level of detail of the Freight Mobility section.
- Need to address route functions.

In the Traffic Calming Chapter:

- Need to introduce the chapter as a Traffic Management Component
- Obtain Washington example photos
- Eliminate the judgmental nature of some of the language

- Remove roundabouts from the chapter, as it simply creates confusion in trying to differentiate with Traffic Circles and because Roundabouts are addressed in another chapter
- Get rid of “Desirable” and “Undesirable” labels and simply state the results and considerations.
 - Want to produce a document that is neutral – simply state issue.

In the Process Chapter:

- The Community Based Approach chapter needs to be moved to the front of the document – critical chapter in this effort
- Need to emphasize that the participants in the project development process need to enter the process with no pre-conceived notions
- Emphasize that the Community Based Approach is the key to CSD/CSS and is so important that another whole document is devoted to describing it

The bulk of the group’s reports consisted mostly of alterations to the individual chapters. Group 2’s suggestion offered a different direction (potentially) to the development of the document and prompted some discussion by the group. King suggested Brian send out an e-mail outlining the potential options for direction based on the existing direction; Group 2’s suggestion; and combinations thereof. This would allow the group to have an electronic discussion and resolve the direction issue prior to continuing forward with the review process.

Brian requested that all comments and edits on the document be sent to him either electronically (using the “Track Changes” option) or by marked up hardcopy, which can be mailed to him at:

Brian Hasselbach
WSDOT Design Office
P.O. Box 47329
Olympia, WA 98504-7329

Wrap Up: Brian noted that the next full IDG meeting is scheduled for April. He reminded the group, however, that, per earlier agreement, he would be scheduling shorter, inter-mediate meetings between now and April, for content specific reviews of the companion document.

Action Items:

- Brian will send out an e-mail requesting dates and locations of upcoming meetings and conferences for education and marketing opportunities.
- Brian will set up a Training Sub-Committee kick-off meeting to discuss results of discussions with T2 Center.
- Brian will send out an e-mail prompting an electronic discussion for the direction of the document.